

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Subregion: SOUTH CENTRAL **County:** MARIPOSA

Applicant: MARIPOSA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Project Title: SIERRA NEVADA FOOTHILLS NATIVE PLANT DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

Reference Number: SNC 070308

PROJECT SCOPE

The Mariposa County Resource Conservation District will develop an interpretative garden of Sierra Nevada Foothills native trees, shrubs, groundcovers, grasses, and wildflowers in an accessible setting suitable for public use.

The demonstration garden shall include plants that are drought-tolerant, require little or no irrigation, and effectively stabilize the soil and control erosion on an impacted site. Additionally, Mariposa RCD will:

- Develop interpretative signage for use in educating visitor's on the principles associated with planting with native species as a means of watershed protection;
- Ensure the final product is accessible to the public, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance;
- Partner with the Upper Merced River Watershed Council on the installation of watershed protection measures, such as stormwater best management practices (BMP's) in and around the project site;
- Partner with local educational agencies to provide this as a resource for students in the area;
- Develop and produce educational pamphlets and posters for distribution to area schools and other interested parties;
- Generate volunteers to participate and contribute to the completion of the overall project;
- Incorporate the finished project into the Mariposa County Agri-Nature Trail events;
- Develop and distribute educational materials for use by students and teachers based on California Academic Content Standards;
- Conduct volunteer recruitment and compile roster of volunteers.

Mariposa RCD will partner with the following groups to ensure an inclusive approach to the project:

- Upper Merced River Watershed Council
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners of Mariposa County
- Xerces Society
- Yosemite Area Audubon Society
- California Native Plant Society
- Woodland Elementary School
- Mariposa County 4H
- Mariposa County Juvenile Probation Community Service Program

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Conduct volunteer recruitment and compile roster of volunteers	April 2008 – May 2008
Procurement of plants, seeds, materials and equipment	May 2008 - September 2008
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC for review	October 2008
Development of interpretative signage, informational resources and curriculum component	September 2008 – March 2009
Complete and submit 12-month progress report to SNC	April 2009
Preparation of site for grading, trenching, and redistribution of gravel	April 2009 – July 2009
Installation and completion of baseline design features (irrigation system, ADA path, drains, plant bed, posts for signage)	July 2009 – September 2009
Complete and submit eighteen month progress report to SNC	October 2009
Populate demonstration garden with native plantings	October 2009 – December 2009
Final Report/Final Payment Request	February 2010

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Plants	\$ 2,011
Rental Equipment	\$ 554
Planting Mixes and Mulches	\$ 2,462
Irrigation and Garden Amenities	\$ 5,459
CA Dept of Corrections (Inmate Labor)	\$ 400
Interpretative Signs and Brochures	\$ 7,000
Student Transportation Expense	\$ 300
Project Coordinator Salary	\$ 36,400
Payroll Tax	\$ 3,147
Administrative	\$ 6,265
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 63,998

Letters of Support:

- Mariposa County Fairgrounds
- Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation
- Yosemite Area Audubon Society
- California Native Plant Society
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners
- Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Woodland Elementary School
- Mariposa County Firesafe Council
- Intermountain Nursery
- Mariposans for the Environment and Responsible Government
- American Indian Council of Mariposa County

Recommendation:

Recommend for funding at requested amount of \$63,998.

2. Project Summary

Proposed project: Demonstration garden of Sierra Nevada foothill native plants

Principal proponent: Kris Randal, Education Outreach Coordinator
Mariposa County Resource Conservation District
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Mariposa, CA 95338

Recent and continuing population growth in the Sierra Nevada foothills is impacting this region's natural resources and ecosystems. The long-term sustainability and quality of water supplies are major development-related issues, making the need for water conservation imperative. Protecting and cultivating plants indigenous to the foothills not only contributes to water conservation, but can help maintain healthy, functional ecosystems by preventing soil erosion, stemming the spread of invasive nonnative species, and reducing fragmentation and degradation of oak woodlands, other native plant communities and wildlife habitats. Educating foothill residents on the ecological roles and values of local native plants, their water-conserving adaptations and how to use them effectively in fire-safe landscaping and gardening can help realize these conservation goals.

The Mariposa County Resource Conservation District (MCRCD) proposes a two-year project, commencing May 1, 2008, to develop an interpretive demonstration garden of Sierra Nevada foothill native trees, shrubs, groundcovers, grasses and wildflowers in a public, home-like setting suitable for public use. The proposed site is the public area outside the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Mariposa office at the Mariposa County Fairgrounds. The garden will feature plants that are drought-tolerant, require little irrigation and effectively stabilize the soil and control erosion on a site now essentially barren. The plants selected will have important wildlife values, attract birds and butterflies, and exploit the pollination abilities of native bee populations. Interpretive signs and a pamphlet will describe these qualities and local Native Americans' uses of these plants.

Partnering with the MCRCD will be the Upper Merced River Watershed Council (UMRWC), which will complement this proposed project with a \$22,000 grant to address nonpoint source pollution, erosion control, water conservation, and protection of water quality. Other major partners will include the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Master Gardeners of Mariposa County, the Mariposa County Fairgrounds and the Yosemite Area Audubon Society. We will also invite as collaborators the American Indian Council of Mariposa County, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the regional chapter of the California Native Plant Society, the Mariposa Fire Safe Council, CAL FIRE, the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and the California Oak Foundation.

The MCRCD board of directors, UMRWC stakeholders, the UCCE Master Gardeners and other volunteers will maintain the garden with assistance from the Mariposa County Fairgrounds staff. The garden will be free to the public, self-guiding, and accessible to people with disabilities. We will offer scheduled tours, led by trained volunteers and docents, intermittently throughout the year, on request to school groups, and during the popular biannual Mariposa Agri-Nature Trail tour.

Project budget: \$48,798 with an additional value of \$69,895 in in-kind services.